

A Predator action figure stands in a workshop-like environment. The figure is highly detailed, showing its characteristic dreadlocks, mask, and scale-like armor. It is posed with one arm raised and the other extended. In the background, there is a large metal drum with a label that reads "REDWING". The lighting is dramatic, with blue and orange hues.

REVIEW OF THE MONTH

REVIEWS

Welcome to the *Video World* Reviews pages. Every month we select a broad range of films and ask our panel of critics to give their expert opinions. Naturally, all films reviewed by *Video World* have been granted a certificate by the British Board Of Film Censors.

We grade films on the *Video World* thermometer. It goes like this:
If it's great it's hot
If it's bad it's not!

PREDATOR 2

Fox Video
Danny Glover/18/108 mins
Release date - November 12th

BRAINDEAD

MINDBLOWING

Predator 2, the sequel to Arnie Schwarzenegger's 1987 hit, takes place in 1997, with the settings changed from the jungles of South America to the urban jungles of Los

Angeles. The ozone layer has been further depleted, the smog is thicker than ever and LA is in the midst of its worst heatwave in history. And as if environmental concerns weren't enough, the drug lords have taken over the streets, turning the city into a war zone.

The opening sequence sets the busy-busy action tone, with cars and buildings blowing up, everyone running around shooting off guns and the unseen Predator watching the proceedings from above with his heat-sensitive vision. Arnie has said "Hasta la vista, baby" and is not around this time to give the monster a run for his money. Instead, old anemone-chops must face tough detective Danny (*Lethal Weapon*) Glover and his elite group of LA cops.

The screenplay for the film is every bit as silly as it was for the original, though at least there are none of Arnie's corny asides to contend with. Glover does okay in the lead, though he lacks the big man's charisma and box-office pulling power, but thankfully the monster itself (created by Stan Winston and played by Kevin Peter Hall) is bigger and better than ever, even if it is a little too reminiscent of *Alien* (as a joke reference, the creature has an alien's head on its trophy wall!).

To compensate for Arnie's absence, director Stephen Hopkins (*Nightmare on Elm Street V*) fills the screen with as many spectacular stunts and explosions as he can, rushing around in all directions with his steadicam. Sometimes this gives us too much of a good thing (as in the exhausting opening scene, where we don't know enough about the characters yet to know or care who is being shot or blown up!), but it certainly pays off in the tense finale where Glover and the creature slug it out one-to-one at the top of a futuristic highrise. Though not a major hit at cinemas, this has enough energy and style to hunt out a very big audience on video.

